Boeing-built Satellite Successfully Completes Unique Test

An environmental satellite being built by Boeing Integrated Defense Systems (IDS) a unit of The Boeing Company [NYSE: BA], has successfully completed a unique instrumentation test.

Boeing was awarded a contract from NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, Md., on behalf of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). The contract is to design, manufacture, integrate and launch NOAA's Geostationary Operational Environmental Satellite-N (GOES) and GOES-O, with options for GOES-P and GOES-Q that are based on the Boeing 601 model.

The test, called the dynamic interaction test, ensures the satellite's delicate instruments will accurately track weather patterns from space thereby giving the general public and emergency personnel on Earth the information they need to make life and death decisions. For example, this performance allows more accuracy in predicting a hurricane's path, which could mean the difference between people evacuating or staying in an area that the storm might strike.

The unique test isolates the satellite from any external laboratory or mechanical input such as people walking by or test equipment vibration.

"This test verifies our design and is an important step towards providing a satellite that will exceed all the customer's requirements," said Steve Archer, GOES program director at Boeing Satellite Systems, the satellite-manufacturing arm of Boeing IDS. "With GOES-O currently on schedule for the same type of testing, the GOES-N testing has been a very critical step for the program.

"The test results indicate that the performance of the satellite exceeded our customer's requirements with significant margin. Therefore the weather observation instruments, that are mounted to the body of the satellite, can be very precisely pointed," Archer added.

The first Boeing-built GOES satellite, GOES D, was launched in 1980. Upon completion of N through Q, the company will have built a total of nine spacecraft in the GOES series that provide weather tracking information to commercial, government and military users.

The GOES satellites transmit data collected to NOAA's Wallops, Va. ground station, which relays the data to the NOAA Satellite Operations Control Center in Suitland, Md. The information is then processed and distributed to users throughout the world.

A unit of The Boeing Company, Boeing Integrated Defense Systems, or IDS, is one of the world's largest space and defense businesses. Headquartered in St. Louis, Boeing Integrated Defense Systems is a $23 billion business. It provides systems solutions to its global military, government and commercial customers. It is a leading provider of intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance; the world's largest military aircraft manufacturer; the world's largest satellite manufacturer and a leading provider of space-based communications; the primary systems integrator for U.S. missile defense; NASA's largest contractor; and a global leader in launch services.

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